We Claim:

1. A personal cleansing composition comprising, based upon the total weight of the composition,:

a) from about 1 percent to about 8 percent of an anionic surfactant; and

b) from about 0.1 percent to about 3 percent of a hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer,

wherein the weight ratio of component a) to component b) is about 1:1 to about 20:1, and wherein the composition is mild to the skin and/or eyes and is substantially free of non-ionic surfactants.

2. The composition of claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of component a) to component b) is about 1:1 to about 5:1.

3. The composition of claim 1, wherein the anionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, sulfosuccinates, isethionates, acyl amides, alkyl ether carboxylates, alkyl phosphates, and mixtures thereof.

4. The composition of claim 1, wherein the anionic surfactant is comprised of alkyl ether sulfates and/or alkyl ether carboxylates.

5. The composition of claim 1, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is comprised of at least one acidic monomer and at least one hydrophobic ethylenically unsaturated monomer.

6. The composition of claim 5, wherein the at least one acidic monomer is an ethylenically unsaturated acid monomer capable of neutralization with a base, and the at least one hydrophobic ethylenically unsaturated monomer is comprised of a hydrophobic carbon chain having at least three carbon atoms.

7. The composition of claim 1, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is a composition derived from at least one unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer; at least one hydrophobic monomer; a hydrophobic chain transfer agent comprising alkyl mercaptans, thioesters, amino acid-mercaptan-containing compounds or peptide fragments, or combinations thereof; a cross-linking agent; and, optionally, a steric stabilizer; wherein the amount of said unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer is from about 60% to about 98% by weight based upon the total weight of said unsaturated monomers and said hydrophobic monomer.

8. The composition of claim 1, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is a carbomer available under the tradename, "Carbopol Aqua SF-1."

9. The composition of claim 1 further comprising, based upon the total weight of the composition, from about 1 percent to about 30 percent of an amphoteric surfactant, wherein the composition is substantially free of ocular sting.

10. The composition of claim 9, wherein the weight ratio of the anionic surfactant: amphoteric surfactant is from about 1:0.8 to about 1:4.

11. The composition of claim 8, wherein the amphoteric surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkylimino-diproprionates, alkylamphoglycinates (mono or di), alkylamphoproprionates (mono or di), alkylamphoacetates (mono or di), N-alkyl β-aminoproprionic acids, alkylpolyamino carboxylates, phosphorylated imidazolines, alkyl betaines, alkylamido betaines, alkyl sultaines, alkylamido sultaines, and mixtures thereof.

12. A personal cleansing composition comprising, based upon the total weight of the composition:

a) from about 1 percent to about 8 percent of an anionic surfactant selected from the group consisting of alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl ether carboxylates, and mixtures thereof; and

b) from about 0.1 percent to about 3.0 percent of a hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer that is derived from at least one unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer; at least one hydrophobic monomer; a hydrophobic chain transfer agent comprising alkyl mercaptans, thioesters, amino acid-mercaptan-containing compounds or peptide fragments, or combinations thereof; a cross-linking agent; and, optionally, a steric stabilizer; wherein the amount of said unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer is from about 60% to about 98% by weight based upon the total weight of said unsaturated monomers and said hydrophobic monomer,

wherein the weight ratio of component a) to component b) is about 1:1 to about 20:1, and wherein the composition is mild to the skin and is substantially free of non-ionic surfactants.

13. The composition of claim 12, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is comprised of at least one acidic monomer and at least one hydrophobic ethylenically unsaturated monomer.

14. The composition of claim 13, wherein the at least one acidic monomer is an ethylenically unsaturated acid monomer capable of neutralization with a base, and the at least one hydrophobic ethylenically unsaturated monomer is comprised of a hydrophobic carbon chain having at least three carbon atoms.

15. The composition of claim 12, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is a composition derived from at least one unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer; at least one hydrophobic monomer; a hydrophobic chain transfer agent comprising alkyl mercaptans, thioesters,

amino acid-mercaptan-containing compounds or peptide fragments, or combinations thereof; a cross-linking agent; and, optionally, a steric stabilizer; wherein the amount of said unsaturated carboxylic acid monomer is from about 60% to about 98% by weight based upon the total weight of said unsaturated monomers and said hydrophobic monomer.

16. The composition of claim 12, wherein the hydrophobically modified, crosslinked, anionic acrylic copolymer is a carbomer available under the tradename, "Carbopol Aqua SF-1."

17. The composition of claim 12 further comprising, based upon the total weight of the composition, from about 1 percent to about 30 percent of an amphoteric surfactant, wherein the composition is substantially free of ocular sting.

18. The composition of claim 17, wherein the weight ratio of the anionic surfactant: amphoteric surfactant is from about 1:0.8 to about 1:4.